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A homophile organization serving northeastern Pennsylvania

June 7, 1977

Coalition for Human Rights in Pennsylvania
C/o Barry S. Kohn
1740 Addison Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19146

The Lehigh Valley Homophile Organization endorses Senate Bill 531 and urges its passage for the following reasons:

We believe the state should not attempt to legislate the private sexual lives of its citizens when the persons involved are consenting adults.

Scientifically conducted sociological studies have repeatedly shown that well over fifty per cent of the adult population routinely engages in the acts criminalized under the voluntary deviate sexual intercourse laws.

Acts in which the majority of the population normally engages cannot logically be labeled deviate.

By maintaining laws that protect no one while making criminals of a large segment of the population, the state may be promoting a disrespect for the law in general, including those laws that are beneficial to our society.

The stigma of criminality that attaches itself to those who are known, or believed, to have violated the laws prohibiting voluntary deviate sexual intercourse does great psychological harm to many of the persons directly and indirectly involved.

These laws also provide a means by which legal discrimination may be practiced by those whose personal beliefs cause them to object to the private lives of these persons.

The enforcement of these laws costs the state hundreds of thousands of dollars of tax money each year.

The cases of those arrested for violation of these laws are frequently not brought to trial, but the lives of those arrested may be greatly damaged, sometimes irreparably.

Retention of these laws encourages harassment, physical attacks, and various kinds of exploitation of persons who are believed to have violated these laws, all of which acts are themselves illegal.

The Lehigh Valley Homophile Organization has approximately one hundred fifty members from the Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, Tamaqua, and Kutztown areas.

Robert F. Steelman
Secretary, LE-HI-HO

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